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UP Country Letters.

1852.

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Mansfield, Lewis William

UP-COUNTRY LETTERS:

EDITED BY

PROF. B————, National Observatory.

———— Time driveth onward fast:
And in a little while, our lips are dumb.
LOTOS EATERS.

1869
CITY OF WASH

NEW-YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY, 200 BROADWAY,
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Editorial.

Dear Reader:

It is scarcely necessary to repeat to you the some-time discussions which have been had in regard to the publication of these letters. Time, in giving them a certain perspective, has also removed any unpleasant doubt as to the propriety of showing them to whoever will care to read. A friend suggests that they should be called "Up-Sky Letters," and when you come upon a page which offers you no special point or purport, it may be charitable to read it as "up-sky," keeping your sky,—for tone's sake,—over the Up-Country.

A few passages in a letter of late date from Pundison House, may be pertinent. I give the following:

"I am now so occupied, my dear B——, with health and something to do, that my foregone objections to the book seem as unimportant as the letters themselves. The world rolls, and we roll with it into new moods and postures.

"Briefly, sir: the letters are trifles. If you choose to throw them up to the wind, I do not know that there is any bad seed in them that will grow into mischief; but they will scarcely grow corn or potatoes.

"I may have anticipated—long ago—that those papers would, some day, be gathered together; but now—I look back upon the few past years as upon a dream-vista, from which I am happily escaped. Dreams are very well, but action is better. And illness has its uses, but health only is glorious, and the fulfilment of God's design.

"Do as you please. To those who are in the same invalid and dilapidated condition in which the letters were written,—those who are hedged within a small round of sameness and watching,—there may be some amusement in observing how another in the same condition has managed to get on.

"Except that I am now so busy, I should expect to feel an occasional twinge, at the sight of things not so pleasant in type, as in the writing: for it is astonishing how much one can say or write to-day, which to-morrow, or next week, he would like to withdraw, or say with a difference. But life, with me, is too short for niceties of this kind. Let us travel on."

I can add nothing that will be of use. The only changes which have been made, are in the names of persons and places.

Respectfully,

THE EDITOR.

National Observatory,
Washington, April, 1852.

CONTENTS.

Summer.

		PAGE.
I.	Israel ——: and the Man in the Observatory..	13
II.	Proposals,.....	19
III.	Pundison House,.....	23
IV.	Up-Country Sunday,.....	28
V.	Monday Morning,.....	38
VI.	Monday Evening,.....	44
	The Long House,.....	47
VII.	The Pundison Dogs,.....	52
VIII.	Drive to the Bryars'	57
	The Late Dr. ——,.....	62
IX.	Sunday Night,.....	69
X.	Frank,.....	76
XI.	T. and the Rector,.....	80
XII.	Midsummer,.....	84
XIII.	The Storm,.....	87
XIV.	Frank and Mr. P. Riverizing,.....	90
XV.	Summer Weather,.....	95
XVI.	"Thanksgiving" by Frank,.....	97
XVII.	The Hammock and the Placer,.....	102

PAGE.

XVIII. The Sea-Side, ... 105

Letter from Frank in the City. The Rum-Breather, ... 107

Letter from Frank in the City. The Birth-Day, ... 111

Autumn.

I. The Dark Days, ... 117

Postscript. Arrival of Tidy, ... 119

II. Pundison House in November, ... 122

III. Burglars: Kate and Bob, ... 127

IV. The Last of November, ... 132

Winter.

I. Method at Pundison House. Laws and Regulations 141

II. Feet-Pounding: Star-Catching, ... 147

III. Tib and Good-Bye to Jenny, ... 152

IV. Talk with the Professor, ... 158

V. T.: Joy: Lady Miriam, ... 164

VI. News from Frank, ... 169

VII. Frank's Log-Book I., ... 172

VIII. Thanksgiving, ... 183

IX. Frank's Log—II., ... 194

X. Lady Miriam's Visit, ... 203

XI. Sunday Night Speculations, ... 209

XII. Frank's Log—III, ... 213

XIII. Singing "China," 224

PAGE.
XIV. New-Year's Day, '51, ... 238
XV. Protest, ... 243
XVI. Biz: Bum, ... 246
XVII. Vulgarity of Health, ... 249
XVIII Neuralgia, ... 253
XIX. The Old Clock, ... 258
XX. Tidy, ... 263
XXI. The Tibling, ... 267
XXII. The Late Morning, ... 271
XXIII. Mr. Pundison's Grandfather, ... 276
XXIV. The Old Connecticut Sunday, ... 282
XXV. Visit to Lady M. on the Mountain, ... 290
XXVI. Drive Slow, ... 302

Spring.

I. Spring, ... 309
Letter from Frank at Paris, ... 310
Do. Do. Do. 314
II. His Arrival Home, ... 316
His Good-Bye, ... 318
III. His Departure, ... 321
IV. The Morning After, ... 323
V. The Funeral 325
VI. Addio, ... 330

Summer.

UP-COUNTRY LETTERS.

I.

Israel ——, and the Professor.

Pundison House, Up-Country,
June —, 1850.

Dear Prof.:—Have you any friend whose presence is as a cordial to you—a tonic—a fortifier; who builds great walls about you against the enemy; who lifts you when you fall, and strengthens your knee-joints; who is as a mountain against all moral north-easters and unexplainable calamities; who brings to you always calm weather?

Such a friend I had last winter, whom I had not seen or heard from during the last fifteen years. Hearing that he was in these parts, I besought him to come up and compare notes. I did this not without some fear and trembling, that I should not see

my old acquaintance, but only certain ruins, as it were, and distant hints of what had been. I said to myself, some one will knock and I shall open the door, and seeing a tall strange-looking man, I shall not know my old friend. But it was not so. I did open the door, and put eyes upon the undoubted Israel. It was he, or, if you please, it was him, and I was I; so at least he was pleased to intimate.

Looking sharply upon him, came back to my memory that same strange and slightly quizzical look, now so sharp and well-defined, then only shadowed forth in his boy-features. Then the boy, now the man. And it was pleasant to find a man who has decided that two and two are four; who has no scrupulous doubts that three times five are fifteen! A man of facts and opinions, and principles, and not of fragments of such, which make up the composition of most people in these wise days.

Ah, how we did talk, sir! all day and all the long evening, we ceased not till the week was gone, Outdoors the air was keen as a two-edged sword, so we piled on the wood and the anthracite and talked. Don't speak of eating and drinking, sir, to a man who is hungry for a talk. Remind us of no common appetites. My friend Israel and I are having

a talk—say rather an illumination; a bonfire, into which we throw all old prejudices and roots of error and get at the mere common sense of things,—the simple statement—the original announcement—the base of the pyramid.

Like yourself, my friend is a Professor. He expounds the mathematics, and so forth, in —— College, in one of the great States of the West. Only for this, and his wife and young Israels, I would have kept him: I would have enacted a higher law that he should stay in these parts for the rest of his days. My friend seemed built for years of rough-and-tumbling; at least, more so than myself. His temperament also favors him. His calm weather will be to him as a score, at least. May he live as long as he desires, and find fair weather whenever he travels. We did the best we could to keep him; gave him our room, and retired ourselves to the north room. I did not dislike the change. The windows look north and east, and the sunrise came blazing in every morning in a way that was delightful. I remarked also to Mrs. P. that our advantages in seeing northern lights in that room, would be very great. Like the sunrise, the north star looked directly upon us.

Being slightly given to questionable wanderings in speculative matters, it was pleasant to feel my friend

pulling at my coat-tail occasionally, to get me down in a safer and healthier air. It's of no use, he would say, pleasantly, you will only get lost and have infinite trouble and path-searching to get home again. You will drop down in the night in a strange country, and somebody perhaps, bringing a hasty candle to your balloon, will blow you up. Stay at home, sir, and be content, and when you have an impossible question, ask your dog Rover, and he will give you as good a reply as you will get from anybody. Some things are, whether we understand them, or not. And some are evil and some are good. Choose the one and let alone the other. In this, you have the whole matter.

The Professor did not confine himself to me, but made friends of the whole house. Although he is congregational, as it is called, in his religious opinions, I found Mrs. P. getting quite partial to him. Not that she liked his dogmas, but it was so charming to find a man who has dogmas and defends them.

Parson ——, from the *Full Moon*, a village on our borders—called here soon after the Professor arrived, and they talked up all manner of matters, theological and professional. Being at the hour when I usually nap, I subsided gently for a space, and slept while they mutualized. A few days afterwards I drove the Professor down to the

village to return his visit. We fortunately found the minister in his study again, and it being my nap-hour, and the reaction from the drive being in fact, irresistible, I took another—and I will say a very grand—snooze, in the minister's rocker. As I partially waked, now and then, I heard them pounding and expounding upon the old divines, and Princeton and Princeton affairs, and I slept perhaps with more than my usual satisfaction, from knowing that upon those hard and knotty points, I should have been as a child before them. We came home through an atmosphere as sharp as needles,—in the last rays of a brilliant sunset,—and the next day my friend went down into *Tac Hatterac*, promising to return again; but now I am sitting with windows open in this blushing month of June, and my friend comes not. He has gone home, long ago, by the southern route, and is all absorbed in his mathematics and young Israels.

My dear Professor, you see now my position. I am *distrait*—from this loss. Where, now, shall I find some one who will be to me as this Israel?

Exploring about the country, I pause over your observatory; and, as near the sky as is possible in that building, I behold a stoutish man, black-eyed as the midnight, who is sitting in a jockey-chair, on a circular

railroad, wheeling himself silently here and there, or spying through a tube, among the stars and other spots of the universe. A man whose only dealing is with facts. Ah, my dear B——, you are the man for me. Home, from cruising about the world, I apprehend, my old friend, that you are my fixed fact. Be this prop to me, Professor. Surround me as a mountain. You are precisely in the condition in which the Dominie was to me —in that we have not seen each other for these many years. Let *us*, also, compare notes. Let us sit down at these magnificent distances, you with your cigar, and I with my Souchong, and be a committee of one, in each place, to decide upon matters and things in general. Shall it be so? Yours, Z. P.

II.

Proposals.

June, 1850.

If you accept my proposition, sir, I shall count upon your being a man of nerve; for I revolve through a variety of moods. I am this, to-day; that, to-morrow; and the other thing next week; that is to say, strong, or weak, or indifferently stupid, as the weather and my physical condition permit. Have you the courage to face such an announcement; for, if not, we had best come to a quick conclusion. But one thing, as it seems to me, you may count upon with some certainty: that we do get the virtue of the sunshine and the rain, and the blue sky (leaving the stars out), better than do you in town, and upon them we can always report.

And a man who is so busy with the sky, must have some interest in knowing how it looks elsewhere in the world, what storms are coming up, and what chances

we have of a fair to-morrow. Now that you have come home from wandering about the world, and we are both housed, for some little time at least, it will not be like sending letters off, as heretofore, to the South Seas, or wherever your ship might be dashing the spray. Your last letters from Malta and Algiers are already obsolete. It is pleasant to know that what I send you will not need to get stale from mere travel; and I shall expect from you, sir, the freshest and brightest of all the starry news.

We have a few friends here and there, in this world and the old, who are in the habit of sending us an occasional "Good morning." Once in six months or so, we look about to see if any are missing, sending out the usual inquiry, and if we get an "All's well," we make but little pause, and plunge on in the great stream of life. By and by, as we so look about us, one and another are gone. There comes no reply; but a few lines from a friend of our friend will tell us that he has finished his correspondence here: his hand is palsied: it is dust.

I propose, Professor, that we shall exchange a few words oftener than this six months' questioning; and if your leisure will not permit you to reply to me always, I will, at least, have the satisfaction of saying my say. I shall

prose sometimes; oftener, perhaps, I shall preach; but this I beg you to consider as a mere habit of talking to myself; for, doubtless, we have an affair of some importance on hand—that is to say—in getting ready for the next stage of life: the next and last administration of affairs.

We purpose, for the present, a life of quiet and repose; we can get the sunshine here as well as in New-York or London, and better too. It is enough. Any thing more than this, and bread and meat, is—nonsense.

I do not say that our sister Tidy will be wholly content with this plain fare. She may be looking for a dash of "nonsense."

Youth should be crowned with hope, unless it has already found a happy resting-place in its own indwelling joy; and it may be that to our sister the mornings and evenings may even now roll by all as on golden wheels. I have a suspicion that this is so, in all its fulness and beauty, but almost tremble to utter a word as to what may be in her future. Our friend Frank may know, but, as yet, I doubt if he has whispered the thought even to his own soul.

But of further travel we have no need. It is pronounced on all sides that the pause we have now made

is a happy one; at the longest, it will be to me, at least, but short. Let us use these last days in calmness, to get ready for the great journey.

We can send our thought to England or the North Pole, and that is as good as to go there, and saves trouble and wear and tear. Nature has decked herself pleasantly, to keep people at home and by their own fire-sides. They are nearer heaven there than elsewhere —is it not so, my old friend?—and more likely to reach heaven at last. Home, home; where is it, in London or Paris? Who cares to see you there? Who comes down to meet you at breakfast? Who says "good night" to you, or gives you "the kiss for good morning?"

Good-bye, Professor, before I change from this tearful mood to one of wrath, at the memory of that smutty and smoky London; and let us thank the sweet heaven, my old friend, that instead of a fog-blanket, we have the "blue sky over all." Yours, Z. P.

III.

Pundison House.

June —, 1850.

It is morning again, and we have the doors and windows all wide open for another summer day. How are you, my star-gazer? How is it with you? Were you up all night in that round attic? Ah, what do you know of the sweet morning?

My friend Capt. ———, of Bugle Place, says the luxury of life is to read Bishop Berkley in the morning and play chess in the evening. I shall instead, write to the Professor.

Pray, what had Bishop Berkley to do with such real things as this pure air and light, such palpabilities, such royal, such happy matters of fact? Besides, all the world knows that when he, the Bishop, "said there was no matter, and proved it, it was no kind of matter what he said." Of course not. But I am willing, this

morning, to ignore all the world that is not wanted for our especial purposes. I am in the mood for this to-day.

> "Let us alone, let us alone,
> For in a little while our lips are dumb."

Ah, Professor, is it a sin in me to have made you this flourish, so as the more gently to announce to you, that this, at Pundison House, is our predominant mood; that our feeling to the great world is that of an everlasting good-bye,—that we say with the lotos-eaters, now that we have floated aside into this quiet up-country home,—let us alone—let us alone, we have had somewhat to do with each other and with sufficiently happy results; now let us part in peace; we will stop here, if you please, while you go on. Some day we may meet again, but let us make no promises. People upon the outer borders—outsiders all, addio, addio.

Surgit amari aliquid, say you? Oh no, Professor, a thousand times "no." But let us have one thing at a time.

In this new phase, and with the added lines of the last ten years, I wonder, sir, if you would know me? It would be strange if we should some day meet as strangers, and more strange if we should converse together and unwittingly get talking of old days and

by-gones, and mutual friends, and still not know each other.

I have told you that this place of our retreat is quiet and out of the great world. It has not the quiet, however, of that charming land of the lotos-eaters. We do not hear the solemn beat of the sea; there is no stream in the distance that seems to fall and pause along the cliffs, like a downward smoke: no gaps in the hills opening into inland vales, nor is it "always afternoon" with us. Good morning is my favorite salutation, whatever be the time of day. I do not like to acknowledge that the night is coming, much less that it has come. I like to make believe, at least, that it is still morning.

To my wife all things are just in the flush of sunrise and she carries the brilliance and freshness of morning wherever her glad countenance is seen.

I must tell you, my old friend, privately, that my timbers are giving way. I am getting into the afternoon of my days. I fancy I can almost look over into that land where my sun must set. But my wife insists upon it that we have a long summer day before us.

If it is only sunrise to my wife, to her sister Tidy, who sits half the time dreaming under the maples, it is not yet more than day-break; it is that calm hour, when every thing is looking for, and expecting the day,

which is flashing brilliantly just over the mountains, but is not yet arrived. But will it arrive? Doubtless. Just over the mountains—so near; the morning, the day so near! and will it be under this firmament, or in another and higher one "eternal in the heavens?" Ah, my child, all our mornings are with God.

You will remember my father; but it must be many years since you have seen him. Although past his threescore and ten, will you wonder if I say to you, that I sometimes think it is more "morning" with him than with any of us. Certainly he is stronger and heartier than I am; and with more than twice my years, I do believe there is more youth at his heart than there is at mine.

When you get your furlough, my old friend, you must take us on your way home. You shall come in then some Sunday night and hear us all singing our old-fashioned tunes. It will carry you back to old Connecticut. Tunes which my father will tell you he heard at Milford, or Danbury, or New Haven, more than forty years ago; and, perhaps he will add who it was preached on the occasion—Dr. Bellamy, or Backus, or may be, the famous Dr. Dwight.

We are a little aside from thoroughfares, but accessible, and within hearing of the outer world, i. e., the buzz

of it, as in the rail trains that come up within a mile of us, and go off sputtering and screaming among the hills, carrying a blue smoke all along that sky.

Also, we see in the distance, spires going up here and there; and in the south and east, of a Sunday morning, there are not less than a half dozen bells whose sweet tones come up and pass on, or float and mingle about us. Just in the rear of the house, and from our upper rooms, we look down upon rapids that go galloping away on either hand, and always by listening, we hear the low sound of a not distant cataract.

Good night, Professor; I began this letter in the morning, but now "the dark is over all," and the week draws to its close. It is Saturday night.

Addio, Z. P.

IV.

Up-Country Sunday.

June, 1850.

Blessed be this day for ever and always—in all places of the habitation of whatsoever hath tongue with which to rejoice and a heart to be glad with.

But there is a difference in Sundays. A Sunday in old Connecticut, in those sheltered towns among the mountains is different, oh how widely, from the Sunday in this broad-featured state of New-York. But even here it is a holy day.

Early in the morning every one has put on the distinguishing look of Sunday; a look which has great variations. In my father's face it is severe and inflexible. Having shaved on Saturday, he appears by no means later this morning than his usual hour, and always in a ruffle shirt, white cravat, and a shirt-collar so high and firm, that to look on either side he is obliged

to turn himself carefully around to that quarter. As my father seldom removes his hat, he changes his old one on Sundays when he feels quite well, for one that is comparatively fresh and new, but worn however with entire ease.

Having breakfasted by candle-light, the day begins early with him. By eight o'clock he is seated in his big chair before his comfortable fire, reading the New-York ————,—but Scott's Commentaries is usually seen on the sofa—the old folio loose sheets which have never been bound—and Dwight's sermons, with perhaps the life of Newton.

I have said that his look is severe, but it is only so in the presence of others. It is as much as to say, "Do you know, sir, that this is the Sabbath! Let me hear no idle talk, but reflect, sir, that you are in the presence of the King of Kings."

But when the house is all still and deserted, and he is left alone with his Bible and his far-travelling thoughts —the dogs perhaps stretched at his feet, and no sound any where but the picking of a mouse in the cupboard, or the creak of a door, in some distant and silent chamber—then it is, in his unconscious moments, there is to be seen upon his face, a sunny look of peace and calmness, and lordly hope, which takes at least twenty years

from his life. Disturb him not then, for he is looking over into that land where he must shortly go. He is communing with the happy dead. From his earliest years, his companions have been going away one by one, till now he has passed his threescore and ten, and is left alone, while they—have been silently gathered into the Kingdom of Christ. All the years, as they roll by, pause upon that shore:—all the kind wishes—all the prayers, all the aspirations of a long life, they have gone on to that blessed land. Ah, sir, it is not sleep which keeps him so still and calm, but a true vision of the life to come.

In what a noiseless way is every thing done this calm morning. The women go about whispering and the loudest break upon the stillness is Bob brushing shoes on the south piazza.

It is on this day, that my wife has her happiest look. Always of a Sunday, she is a little picture of peace and joy and thanksgiving. She delights in the day—in all its duties and services, as a bird does in song; it is her life, her garden enclosed. All the week is perfumed, as it were, with her Sunday. Prayer and praise are the proper elements of this day, but these are so common to her at all times, that Sunday seems to be for her especial benefit—that so she might enjoy herself this day after

her own heart; it is thus to her a day of gladness. You will understand how it is, when I tell you that if, having a friend with us to dinner on Sunday, as, say Frank Bryars, or the celebrated———, who so abuses my Claude, I say, you will perceive that if on such an occasion, I produce a small bottle of champagne, my wife makes never the slightest objection. She has some little ways on Sunday which are peculiar to the day. As for instance: I am brushed that morning with a searching exactness, and however carefully I may have arranged my hair, it must always receive one more touch from her gentle hand. She is herself complete and perfect for the day at about ten o'clock and ten minutes: She then appears in a dress, about which I never remember any thing except its entire fitness for the day, and for my wife. She has the rare gift of so wearing things as to make much of little. A collar, for instance, which upon some women would be unsightly and noticeable as such, is to her all neatness and propriety. To enter church one moment after the service begins, is a small horror, which she always avoids if possible. We start therefore, betimes, and if I am well enough she delights to take my arm, and so walk as true and loving husband and wife up to the very door of the church. There she relinquishes the arm: she leaves me there,—she enters another presence.

Our walk across the Shag-Bark and up into the village, (for we are wholly aside from the world,) uses up our fifteen or twenty minutes, especially if my wife has to stop once or twice to balance my hat straight on my head, it having a habit of canting slightly even on Sunday. If we are quite late, she often leaves me on the bridge and walks on faster than my slow gait will carry me, but it is only to return after a little and take my arm again. This does not hasten matters at all, but it eases her impatience, if it is not improper to apply such a word to her on this quiet day. With one or two little episodes of this character, we at last reach the church door together, and not seldom with a brilliance of complexion on her part, which looks on her pure face, almost like sin. When I wish to please her particularly, I put on, not without great effort, my black gloves. I seldom wear gloves. They are sticky things unless the weather is cold, and then give me mittens. Notwithstanding all my efforts at economy, my wife has prevailed upon me to get a new overcoat, and now instead of my old gray, which was inexpressibly dear to me for having warmed me for three winters and in various lands, and for having cost me only six dollars in the beginning,—now I appear in a thing which is well enough, I suppose, but dismally bran-new. With this coat and my black

gloves, they tell me I am renewing my youth. I only feel that I have parted from a true friend.

But now, sir, listen to that sweet chant, "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, oh, my soul, and all that is within me, praise his Holy name." And the "Gloria Patri"—how like a solemn amen does it seem always to these songs of praise.

The morning service, as you know, is pretty long, except when divided, as it very properly is in some churches. Unless I am feeling quite well, I am seldom able to follow through the whole service. Not unlikely the church itself is felt as a restraint upon me—not so much the walls and the roof as the narrow slip in which I am shut: continually, perhaps, I am changing about and getting new postures—and none of them happy ones—none satisfactory: if this is done it is involuntary and without argument. It is like tossing in dreams at night, of which, at the time, we know nothing. But, in regard to the music, I am myself conscious of swaying about somewhat, emphasizing it, as it were, and timing the whole proceeding. Mrs. P. has told me that in reading passages of great force in the Psalter, I have a habit of shaking my head, as much as to say, "That is very great." This may be, and I reply to her, that perhaps, if I was to look about I should find others, also, with as curious little ways and habits.

We get on, at last, to the sermon; but even here, and always attractive as are our rector's sermons, I am not seldom seized with sudden abstractions, which carry me off swiftly, but noiselessly, as a chip is lifted by small whirlwinds in summer weather; and, in a moment, I forget utterly the little church, and the rector, and the holy day. At this time, and while drumming perhaps in a lively manner on the pew-door, I am gently restored by a light pressure on my right foot. This is my wife's doings—she being strictly educated to think that drumming on a pew-door is an improper proceeding: a point which I never argue, but sometimes think I more than make up for this, by the severe and unremitting attention which I bestow upon the rest of the sermon.

I have said that the morning service seems long to me. It may be partly because I was born and bred in a different faith; or rather, I mean not that, but a different manner of worship. But it is not this altogether, for the afternoon prayers are perfectly enchanting, if it is proper to apply such a word to prayer. If they do not leave with me "the peace which passeth all understanding," then am I bitterly deceived. But, so far as emotion is concerned, some old-fashioned tune will be more heart-touching to me, than any prayer which ever fell

from the lips of mortal man; for song says that which words cannot say, and it ascends into Heaven, which is its home and its continual abiding-place for ever.

Our clergyman is almost a perfect pattern of a country rector; so, at least, we think, who have had varieties, and have some ground for this, our present liking. His preaching would never draw crowds, but always gathers together a little circle who know how to appreciate good things. His sermons are like little cabinet pictures, exceedingly well designed, and perfect as a poem from first to last. I do profess to have some taste for a good thing, sir; and, I assure you, this modest man has a rare gift of preaching, which would delight you to hear. I come back to our plain church and our plain clergyman, after our little airings about the country, where we have heard, perhaps, the celebrated Mr. "*Wideawake*," or the notorious—I mean the illustrious —Mr. "*New Jerusalem*,"—I return to our quiet ways and old-fashioned associations, precisely as after stimulants, I would seek out, with what thankfulness, the cool spring by the way-side, and the shade of the old oak tree.

Stir me up with no long pole, sir, on this subject; but give me rest and peace. Do not these breaking bones, and throbbing temples, and the long nights of

weariness, tell me my sin sufficiently, I ask you? Is there any one in the broad land who has more need to ask for God's deliverance "in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our prosperity, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment?"

By the time we reach home, Kate, who goes to her church earlier, and gets home by eleven o'clock, has wheeled out the little round table, and there is already the cheerfulness of dinner—a Sunday dinner—plain and unpretending—always to be partaken of with a modest temperance, to keep open eyes for the afternoon sermon. As we pass through my father's sitting-room—the front of the house being all barred and bolted—he asks the question, "Where's the text?" And if some one cannot produce the text, he concludes we have been to church to very little purpose.

I seldom get out in the afternoon. As seldom does my wife stay at home. Whether it rain or shine, or hail or snow, the performance must be very spirited if it keeps her from the afternoon service. My father and myself take our usual naps; but not as long, if possible, on Sundays as on other days. About two o'clock we exchange papers. I give him some church paper; for which, by the way, it is easy to see that he has but small regard, and receive from him the New-York —-

——. Its readable articles—and they are many—I find marked by him with red chalk, for my especial notice in part, and in part for the benefit of friends a long way off, to whom the paper is always sent, after it has been thoroughly exhausted at home.

So goes away, with the richness and silentness of blessing, our Up-country Sunday; and then comes twilight—of all its hours, the most serene and holy—and the day is gone. Up into Heaven, with the thousands which have gone before, it has ascended, and there sits in glory! Beautiful day, thou hast gone home to God: to God and the angels, and the mighty hosts gathered in that blessed land. Gone up to sit in glory for ever! Beautiful day, farewell!

V.

Monday Morning.

Did you ever know a Monday, sir, that had not something dashing in it? something *outré* or ultra, elate and hopeful, or urgent and distracting?

Time was when Monday and I were excellent friends; when rising at the peep of day, I began the week with a shout. Now, I have made friends with calmness and self-possession. I say to Mrs. P———, my dear wife, let us take life easily; joyful as you like, but gently, temperately.

But this morning—the day being of that brilliant and flashy character common to Monday—as we were all sitting about the round table, the lady astonished me with a most extraordinary proposition. On a day so beautiful, that to live and breathe should have been her utmost wish (as it was mine), she desired—she and

Tidy—to drive down to the market-garden with my mare Jenny! A mare, sir, which, though she has seen fifteen years, still insists upon rounding a corner like a whirlwind. They say she is so old and so gentle. Doubtless, she is high bred, she is gentleness itself, but —she has thrown me over her head more than forty times. I could point you now, sir, to the spots made memorable by those somersets. Beside, her nervous susceptibility (I do not call it timidity) is beyond their comprehension. By raising an umbrella before her, I can make her kneel before me and beg like a child.

Well, sir, imagine two women (say girls rather) behind such a horse, and suppose they have a corner to round, and are not thinking of her way of doing it; or suppose a trace slips off the hook going up hill—suppose a spring breaks—thunder and Mars, sir! suppose Jenny herself gets a little flighty? What would they do? what could they do? Why, sir, they would be utterly lost; their wits would fly to the four winds.

All this I submitted to them, but of what avail on a Monday morning? Talk to the north wind, but not to young girls bent upon a drive. Fortunately before the morning was quite ruined, Frank Bryars came in and offered to drive them down. Frank is not strong, but he knows Jenny, and no one understands

better than yourself, Professor, that a man who *knows* a horse can drive him with a tow-string.

They returned in great glee, just as Kate was getting out the table for dinner, and the crowing was very spirited. They had got this and that; had been here and there; and my wife had held the reins all the way.

"Why," said she, "didn't you see me drive up the yard?" "Oh, yes," I said; "and if Johnny had not been there to stop the mare, she would have walked straight into the barn, wagon, women, and all"—which was the fact.

But to return to the dinner; not mutton, but lamb-chops, juicy and tender as a pheasant; and for dessert, strawberries and cream—real cream, and strawberries picked this morning.

Nothing more, you observe, to spoil the dinner, as meats of any other kind—pastries, puddings, and the like—which are bad enough at any time, but with lamb-chops and strawberries, would be an utter profanation.

I mistake—there was an extra—a salad with a cream dressing. After dinner the dogs came in for their bones, bursting with laughter and short barks.

Tidy came out of her dream, and chatted as

sharply, as though she had never had a dream in her life. Frank was in his best mood, and my wife, what with the fine morning and the jarring of the wagon, looked as brilliant as a sunrise in the mountains. It was the look of one who had held the reins!

Directly after dinner we went out on the west piazza: a spot well shaded with pines and maples, and climbing vines; but not so dense as to be chilly, if the air happens to be lacking of that extreme warmth which, to invalids like Frank and myself, is so acceptable. Taking out easy chairs, we had the afternoon all before us. Birds were about in the branches, and the hum of noises going on in the meadows, and down by the river-side, was a complete music.

I had that delightful feeling of weariness which a dinner not too heavy will sometimes give to an invalid; and as it was my usual hour of napping, I began to recede from the actual world, and coast about on uncertain shores, coming back quite often to take a fresh start, and hear a word or two of the conversation. Rover, who imitates his master, and Pompey who imitates Rover, was spread out on his haunches, with his nose between his paws, now and then snapping indolently at flies and bumble-bees that floated that way. Frank stood leaning against the plum-tree, in a place com-

manding a view of the meadow and river below—a favorite look-out of his; while Tidy seated herself a little way apart, under a maple, and retired immediately into one of her pleasant reveries; waking occasionally with great earnestness to admire the plum-tree by the garden fence, which was now heavy with young fruit.

"We should have been back sooner," said Frank, returning to the piazza, "but I did not like to come by way of the Long House, and so we came around." I was nearly asleep, but remarked, with a good deal of emphasis, "Of course," and grasped again at my broken dream.

"Do you know," he continued, "do you know, Tidy—I mean Mr. Pundison—do you know why I always dodge that house?" and without waiting for an answer he went on; "it was about ten years ago—"

Again, I was nearly asleep; but hearing the words "ten years ago," I took them up mentally for a private examination. To grasp the whole subject was too overwhelming. "Ten years," I said to myself; "where was I ten years ago? and where were you, sir? and where was any body ten years ago? Why, sir, the idea is preposterous! Besides, you don't know the mare from Adam: she'll jostle you to pieces before you go ten

rods—that is, I mean, ten years—eh ?—no, ten rods—ten years, ten rods, ten years—ten—te—t—"

Mr. Pundison was asleep. The Monday was too much for him. Good night, Professor. **Z. P.**

VI.

Monday Evening.

We slept:—Frank, the gentle people, the dogs, and myself. The thermometer, also, having found a happy mark at about 80, stood still all through the golden hours. But the world went on all the same, until by and by the sun made a tangling pause in the top of the great pine by the road-side; and, by that sign, it was five o'clock.

I was lying in a leather-backed chair, on the piazza, with my feet raised, and facing the northwest, when I emerged slowly, and began to interest myself—my head hanging well back—with the beautiful effect of the sunlight in the tops of the maples, and what light it was, and whether they were maples, or not rather some kind of immortal growth—so beautiful they looked—in some better land. But, lowering my gaze, I soon came

upon Frank Bryar's pale face, his hair floating about it, and himself fast asleep. Tidy was still under the maple, leaning back against it like a statue, and my wife, sitting in a little short-legged chair, by my side, was watching with a mischievous smile to see me come out of my dream. In-doors was a little clatter of tea-things, and presently a bell rang, and we all started up, and were seriously shocked at having napped to such an extent.

We took our tea about the round table—a table which I have the habit of mentioning so often, because of its exceeding beauty. It is slightly oval, and stands upon a single stem, which, at bottom, branches out quadrupally upon four castors. It is of black walnut, and has a certain happy look which distinguishes it at once from all other tables. My wife thinks so much of it, it is always the first thing she looks at on entering the room. All the afternoon she will sit dividing her attention between some fancy work and the round table. It was said, last winter, that Rover cured himself of a bad scald he got in the kitchen by coming in and looking at the table; and, I suppose, it is not to be doubted. One thing I witnessed myself, and can therefore vouch for, that Pompey got a bone in his throat by stopping to look at it—the table—while in the act of swallowing. This was when we had had it but a few days, and every

body was being enchanted with it. I will add, here, that Pompey got the bone out of his throat by coming back and taking another look! This, you know, is upon the principle of homœopathy.

As I said, we all took tea. No fancy cakes, you understand, or sweetmeats (distressing things); but sweet bread, and butter of pure gold, and a cup of black tea, sir, with cream! A high cup, with thick walls. Only to look at such a cup of hot souchong is pleasant. Artistically and prospectively it is a happy thing; but to imbibe—to make it a part of your curiously contrived nervous organization:—this, sir, is inspiration.

I once asked, over the round table, "What is the chief end of man?" My wife and Tidy making no response, and looking rather bewildered withal, I threw light upon the subject at once, by replying, "To drink black tea with cream!"

After tea we had a wood fire kindled in the grate—the air outside now getting cool—and gathering about it while the light glimmered about the room, I called upon Frank to go on with his story of the "Long House."

"It is not a story," said he, "but entirely a matter of fact, or, I assure you, I should not take the trouble to dodge that house so often as I do; but, observe, it is but a plain statement of a plain transaction."

"Speak clear and distinct," said my father, who had now taken a seat with us; "you have been to college, sir, and should know the importance of speaking clear and dis—tinctly." Frank bowed to my father, and continued the story. "*Louder*," said my father, "and let each word be fairly articulated. This was the rule, sir, at Morris Academy, more than forty years ago." How this concerned Tidy is beyond conjecture; but little confusions come upon her so strangely of late that I am tired of seeking for explanation. Frank continued—

"At the time I speak of—when I was a mere lad—the Long House had been recently built, and should have been occupied by a good class of tenants; but for some unaccountable reason, they were generally a pretty shabby set of people.

"There were four tenements, but they were sub-let, and instead of four families only, there were sometimes eight or ten; and as I had the collecting of the rents, I came in contact with nearly all of them; but I will only speak of the one at the corner occupied by a man of the name of Smith, who appeared to me to be an established loafer. His rent was always behind, and I never had the fortune to discover that he had any employment. I would find him usually hanging about the village, looking rather pale and miserable, but as it

seemed to me, also intolerably lazy. I was full of blood then, and had no more patience with such characters than your father, sir, has now. But there was something about this man which prevented my being at all harsh with him, for he never gave an ill-tempered reply, but always was expecting to get some money from some quarter, and he did hope he should not be disappointed in it. But it never came; and now of late he was not so well as he had been, and it was difficult for him to get that kind of work which he could do. He was troubled, I think he said, with chills and fever, but said not so much about his ills as he did about his plans and expectations, still hoping to bring up the rent pretty soon. But at last, matters getting desperate, he suggested that he could give me a bill of sale of his cow; a bill of sale was accordingly made out, and as the cow was worth some twenty dollars, it would cover the rent and leave a margin beside. On the whole I was rather satisfied with this arrangement; for the house, you observe, was not built exclusively for the comfort of its tenants, one especial object being that it should pay something back to the capitalist who built it. It was not my house; but, if I did the business, I must do it in a business way.

One bright sunny morning, after a long interval,

during which I had not called at the Long House, I thought I would look in and see if Smith was getting ready to take up the bill of sale. Knocking at his door, it was opened by his wife, a young woman, who would have been happy-looking, but for an expression of care and thoughtfulness, which is so common among married women of her class in life. But now I observed an unusual calmness in her features, as she replied to my question if her husband was at home, "Yes, walk in, sir," and stepping back into the room as I followed her, she pointed silently to the other side of the room. I was about to speak, when I was struck dumb at seeing where she pointed, her husband lying at full length in his winding-sheet. I looked about for a moment, and sat down in a perfect maze; none of us said a word. The dead man could not speak—neither could I—nor the wife. 'But now,' some voice suggested, 'is a very proper time, if you have any thing to say about that rent. He will not be harsh with you, Mr. Bryars—you can say what you like—you can do what you like now—he will make no objection. There is the cow, of which you have the bill of sale—you can drive her home if you like. I suppose the woman will have to starve herself to get a coffin for her husband; but *he* will not know any thing about it; for you see he is very still.'

"Something like this seemed to be whispered there in the minute that I staid, and the woman gave way and broke into tears and sobs that were more than I could witness. I stammered out something, and left the house, and I believe I have never darkened that door since."

There was a pause as Frank finished his account of the matter, and I said, "What did you do for the woman?" "Very little," said he. "I did what I could, gave up the bill of sale and the rent, of course, but I was not empowered to do any thing in such cases, and I had nothing myself. But think, sir, of calling for rent on a man in his winding-sheet!"

At this moment my father rose from his seat, and struck into the tune of St. Martin's at the very top of his voice, walking up and down the room in his way, and gesticulating with extraordinary vehemence. We all joined in, and St. Martin's was repeated until it shook the rafters;—so Kate said, who was up stairs at the time finishing her work.

After St. Martin's, came one or two other old Connecticut souvenirs, and we finished, as we do often, with "Denmark," and the *Gloria Patri.* "Good night," said Frank, as he started for home—"that last tune is as good as a tonic. Good night, good night, Tidy."

But Tidy, who was looking out one of the south windows, made no reply. "Tidy, said I, "Frank is saying good night to you." "Yes, I know," said she—"Good night," and continued looking out into the dark.

They are all gone now, and I am alone. But what was the meaning of those three round drops in her eyes? Ah, my friend, if I had not moods of my own sometimes, I should be a little provoked at these strange doings. Addio, Z. P.

VII.

The Pundison Dogs.

Have the kindness, Professor, to say to that person who reported the contemptible story about the Pundison dogs, that he is a slanderer and a ——! Fill up that blank as you please: you can put nothing too bad in it.

When any thing wicked is reported to me, I am in the habit of saying to my wife and Tidy—"Don't believe it: don't believe a word of it: wait until some professor has proved first, that it is possible, next, that it is probable,—and lastly, that it is true. And as to ourselves, let us believe we have many right good friends whom we have never seen or heard of; and that here and there about the world, many and many a good word is being said about us that we never hear." In this pleasant faith, sir, we live, day by day, but that story about our dogs,—I will speak to that.

Perhaps it may be assumed that we know something about those dogs: we raised them, as the phrase is, and their whole training has been under our own eyes. They are from the celebrated dog, GROWLIWITCH, now living a retired life on a farm over the river: a dog of great quickness of parts and the highest respectability. They were brought up in a sugar-box, near the barn, and their habits carefully looked into,—day by day. If they have ever turned from a fight, as in younger days they may have done, their quickness, now, in snuffing up any possible enemy is positively wonderful. I have a faint recollection of seeing Rover on the jump through the pasture with the old cow behind,—her tail high in the air,—but, sir, the cow was in a fury, and he was a puppy. Now, not a pin drops on the piazza but they give the alarm. So in their naps they are continually growling, being always engaged, you see, with the enemy.

Rover, in his puppyhood, had a habit of jumping through the window-glass in my father's room, landing on the south piazza, with his mouth full of barks, and caring nothing for bruises and cuts:—his only thought, —the enemy. The size of the glass (10 × 12), gives you the size of the dog. Then imagine the half of Rover, and you have Pompey. Whatever Rover does,

Pompey will do as far as he can; but their tempers are something diverse. The one, all exuberance and a hearty good-nature, laughing loudly upon the smallest pretext: the other shy and of a highly nervous organization. Rover is black and white, with feet like the feet of a leopard, and he steps as though he was proud of them. Pompey is of a rich gold color, and goes about rather daintily.

Every hot day we give them a plunging bath in a barrel of cold water. Strange to say, they don't like it; their impression evidently being that they are then approaching the climax of events. Escaping from their bath, it is Rover's way, exhausted and dripping as he is, and undecided whether to laugh or cry,—to cogitate upon the matter for about a minute under the big cedar then—exercise being the rule after a bath—he begins with a little trot and flourish about the yard, and at last disappears up the great north road at the top of his speed. He is gone for an hour or two in the up-country, and on his return it is always noticeable that he carries his tail very high, and laughs immoderately. His unconsciousness of the morning affair is very rich. Let it go now, he says, and say no more about it. But Pompey says nothing of the kind. He begins and ends the whole proceeding with continual barks and scratches.

He dies, or thinks he dies, at least five times before it is over: then gives himself a shake and starts on a race about the meadow, down and across, sideways and all ways: squares, circles and rhomboids, yelping and tumbling in the grass over and over, and still yelping, with his tail straight out like a scared colt. This, for a full half hour, after which he takes a nap in the grass, with one eye open, never forgetting the bath. It must be a tempting bone that will bring him nearer than the meadow fence for the rest of the day.

I have been at the trouble to tell you all this, sir, that you may see what slight grounds are sufficient for those who have the heart to build to themselves monuments of their own malice. Cowhide that—person—Professor, the first opportunity: or, if you choose to bring an action for slander, I will stand by you to the last dollar.

One thing more:—It has been said that although GROWLIWITCH continues to have puppies, she has never produced any such happy specimens as these firstlings, and therefore—and so forth and so forth.

Oh the judgments of this wicked world! Because my neighbor sins shockingly, therefore my virtue is good for nothing. The appearance of a good character,—proof of the contrary: in other words, all goodness is a

sham and a pretension, and the devil the only honest and plain spoken character. What a world it is!

Sir, who ever heard of a whole family of illustrious men? There are families of blackguards, but you will observe here, also, that some one will strike out and be a gentleman. Nature is always trying to restore herself: she is mostly in a bad way, but spares no efforts to come up.

Sometimes, after such efforts, the results are brilliant to a high degree,—and such, sir, are the Pundison Dogs. Yours, Z. P.

VIII.

Drive to the Bryars'.

Up-Country, June, 1850.

Our days roll so smoothly, sir, that we have not much incident to report. A walk with the dogs: a newspaper in the hammock: a nap on the piazza, followed by black tea with cream—and the day is gone. Occasional ripples on this smooth flow of time are our only outside recreations.

I was this morning looking through the open window at the bobolinks balancing on the long grass in the meadows, and into (like-beautiful things) the deep mosses of Hawthorne, when I heard my name called from an upper window. It was my wife.

"Zariar," said the voice. (Zariar is soft for Zachariah, as T. is for Thankful.) "Zariar! Mr. Pundison!" "Eh! what!" said I. "Do you know we are to go to Frank Bryars' to tea to-night?" "Yes," I replied;

"and what more?" "Nothing—only don't walk off and forget all about it."

Directly after this, I heard her voice winding in low tones through the morning chant, stopping for a moment to adjust something in the room, and then going on again, up and down and all about through the sweet music, like the talk of a brook heard in the pauses of the wind, or like the bobolink balancing and singing a little song—then down in the grass to chatter and dig about, and up again for another mouthful of praise.

I turned to Mr. Hawthorne, and read the same page up and down six times without taking a thought. "I wonder now—(I was talking to myself)—"I wonder if I do wander away in that fashion? Have we got in that dilapidated condition, Mr. Pundison, that we do not really know whether we are in the body or out of the body?" And I mused for a little space, arguing the point: presently a neuralgic shock decided that we were in the body. "But are we a little *distrait*, sometimes? Is it the fact? Is it probable—say, rather, is it possible? Ah, well—Tidy will know—we will ask Tidy."

The dogs would have been on my side—they would have taken oath that I was entirely regular; but in the uncertainty, I staid under the maples all the morning,

venturing about cautiously, lest my vagrant habits might be plotting to win me away.

At last the sun began to slant about among the trees, and sprawl the shadows in such a large way that we began to think of starting for the Bryars'. The women had been waiting for it to be time to go, and now they had waited rather too long, and it was getting late.

But John was soon ready with the mare, and piling into the lumber wagon as well as we could we rattled off. At the very start, my left leg received such a shock, that it shook out an old neuralgic twist which had been asleep there for months; but there was no use in growling when the wagon made such a racket: nobody would hear it. But the drive was short. We soon came in sight of Frank's house standing on the hill, far back, and with a row of poplars going up the yard and before the house itself, and other old forest trees, burying it in deep shadow.

The mare was now going like a streak; for any thing that rattles, always starts her; and, besides, John knows nothing about driving her, although I have trained him thoroughly, again and again. As it was, the boy could not stop her; and so, instead of drawing up gracefully before the front door, where Frank and Fanny stood

ready to receive us, we flew past on swift wings, and only brought up in the extreme recesses of the back yard.

It was the opinion of all—(for the beast is afraid of me as death)—it was the opinion of all, that if I had not seized the reins and said, Whoh! just as I did, she would have cleared the fence, and taken us all over into the orchard.

We got out on the wood-pile and took breath, while Frank came inquiring what we were doing out there in the lots. Apart from that screeching shoot through the left leg, I was entirely cool; but my wife, I observed, had put on a very fresh color, and Tidy, for one who dreams so much, was quite dewy and sparkling.

You see John cannot or will not understand that the mare must be driven gently at the start, and then she will go gently all the way: but touching her with a whip is downright madness.

We entered the house by the kitchen and the middle room; and so into the front parlor. Just up by the chamber windows the blackbirds had gathered in the poplars, and were singing with the greatest vociferation; groups of them flying every moment down to the river banks, and then returning shortly to their nests in the poplars. Presently we went in to tea, in the back parlor; one of

those enchanting rooms which you fall in love with at sight. We were still within the sunset which came blazing past the house in crimson and gold, and flying across the river and valley (where the village, more than a mile distant, was lying cool and shadowy), marked itself brightly, and with the sharpest colors, on the opposite hill-side.

We sat down to our tea, and such was the charm of the room and the scene altogether, that although it all faded away presently, and the lights were brought in, we still sat about the table until we all rose to come home. The lady-chatter at the tea was incessant: great arrearages of up-country gossip were brought up and discussed, and finished. After the table was cleared, some one brought Frank a cigar, when my wife said to him, "I beg, Mr. Bryars, you will not tell any more of your horrid stories. I dreamed of that Long House all night." But Frank was not to be put off. He was beset to have another talk. "That story," said he, looking at Tidy in a kind of solemn abstraction, "was rather remarkable; but, after all, the man had a home, such as it was, to die in; and I take it, that is some comfort."

Turning to me, he continued: "Did you ever know old Doctor ———. He must have lived a little before

your time, but of course you have heard of him; but neither you, nor any one, knew him as I knew him. He died without a home; at least his home was such, that he left it evidently for the purpose of dying away from it. The Doctor, as you will remember, was a very large man, at least six feet high, and with a head and face in full proportion for such a frame. As is not unusual with large men, there was a look of extreme kindness in every feature of his fair face, and he inclined slightly to baldness. His head and face might without caricature, be said to be *magnificent*, and this also might be said of the whole man, for such he was. Why he should be so shy and diffident, however, seemed very strange.

"There was so much sickness in our family in those days, that I soon got thoroughly acquainted with him. I almost invariably drove down for him, when he was wanted, and this was always two or three times a week. In this way, we got to know each other, although we said but little. Day after day we drove about together with scarcely a word between us; but the most commonplace remark from the Doctor, accompanied by one of his looks was equal to a volume in meaning.

"I used to sit waiting for him in the carriage by the hour, and sometimes would have to drive him about

town before he could start. The world in those days was all before me, and nothing suited me better than this idle kind of life. Of course it pleased the Doctor immensely to have one who was not worrying him to death with alarming stories of patients at the point of death, and so forth; and as he always had some private grief in hand (told, however, in so gentle a way that you could only smile at it), I generally had the first hearing. Sometimes it was some precious scandal, which somebody had got up about him in the village, but oftener some personal ill, as a back-ache, or a rheumatic touch, which would cause him to put on a face of the highest individuality. When he came on horseback, as he sometimes would, on fine summer days, it was amusing to see him come up the yard, leading his horse, with one hand on his lame back, to indicate the *locale*, for the time, of his private grief; and not seldom, he would stop half-way up the yard and be feeling in his pockets, where some luckless vial, from too great pressure, had broken in pieces. 'Sure!' he would say, pulling out his hand, red with some high-colored drug, 'I have broken that tincture all to smash.'

"At such times, I have sat down before him and laughed till I cried, but he never seemed in the slightest degree offended with any thing I did. Giving me

one of his looks, he would perhaps ask, 'How is your digestion?' and then laughing himself most immoderately, his face would directly become calm and sedate again. Professionally, I suppose, he was one of the best read men in the state, and his untiring kindness and perseverance in cases even of small importance, was most remarkable. Day after day, and night after night, he would be about his patients, and still the same kind face and unflagging attention to them. His inquiries were thousand-fold; and if you answered correctly, it was very strange if he did not ferret out the trouble. Whether he knew how much humor he carried about in his looks and actions is perhaps doubtful. I remember, it was the one puzzling thing, which I could not quite determine. I think, however, he had a remote idea of it.

"But I am making a long story. The old Doctor at last got poorly—we called him old, though he was in the full prime of life. There was no great change in his appearance, but it was evident that he was getting feeble, and he would sometimes drop a word or two, intimating that he did not expect to practise much more: he had his troubles also, but of those I shall not venture to speak: I will only say that the Doctor found himself quite lonely in the world. Foreseeing his death a few

weeks before it took place, he went up to a little hamlet by the river side, about six miles out of town, and,—as I believe,—with a determination to die there:—I went up to see him while he was there, with the hope of getting him to prescribe for a little girl then very poorly, and also to persuade him to come and take my room and make his home with us. But it was all of no avail: —'The little girl will outlive me,'—said he,—'and at your house I should have the whole village about me: Have you heard the stories they are getting up about me? Ah, well, let them talk.'

"Not a week from this, word came to me, then some distance from home, that the Doctor had failed rapidly, and been brought back to the village, and was thought to be dying. I hurried home, but arrived only in time to see him buried: even then he had not been taken to any room in the village that was familiar to him, but was left at a strange house. I only mention this, however, as an incident of his death, for they were very kind people.

"The funeral was at the church, and never before or since, has that solemn service seemed so solemn as at that time. In fact I never had thought of it: perhaps never had heard it before. I was standing with the congregation when the clergyman entered the church, but

as his voice rose clear and distinct, with those words: 'I am the resurrection and the life,'—the whole house reeled with me, and I dropped into a seat and cried like a child.

"All the rest of the service, but more especially the singing, only added to my intense excitement, and I remember very well that I did not recover myself during that day.

"After the service, I joined in the procession, and in a beautiful spot, just a little out of the village, we laid the old Doctor away: and this was the man," said Frank "who had no home in which to die."

As my friend finished his talk about the Doctor, Johnny was reported, with the mare and a lantern to guide us home. Frank offered his services, which Tidy took upon herself to decline, and with some spirit; again he insisted and again she wholly declined. I looked about to see what was the occasion of so much emphasis, but with no success.

It was very dark. Heavy clouds were floating slowly about, and streaks of moonlight gleaming only here and there at long intervals. I drove the mare myself, and it would have done your heart good, sir, to see the beast pick her way so carefully—just as she used to do years ago, when I drove so often at midnight through

the deep pine-woods, down in that rough river country, where I worked out the best of my days. Time and again in those nights, when I could not even see Jenny herself, I would drop the reins loosely upon her back, and let her pick her way through the darkness.

Always she brought me out safe, and always of her own accord going with the extremest care in places which she knew to be very perilous.

In the same way she now threw her short, pointed ears forward and back, as much as to say—"The difficulties are amazing, but never fear: I know the way." Johnny went ahead with the lantern—a great annoyance, unless it is pitch dark.

Soon we came within hearing of the dogs. We said but little, being all (myself by no means excepted) very much impressed with Frank's reminiscence of the old Doctor.

As we drove slowly up the yard, my father came to the south door, with a lighted candle in his hand, shouting, Who's there?" and crazing the dogs with the pleasant fiction that they were engaged with the enemy. It ended with their jumping in and out of the wagon and all over every body before any one could alight. Pompey, however, whose caution is large, continued at a distance with an incessant yelp, until all possible doubt was removed.

After this long, long talk, sir, upon these trifles, the day is done, and with it closes the week.

It is Saturday night again.

Addio, Z. P.

IX.

Sunday Night.

June, 1850.

Another Sunday—the glad day of the week—has come to us—made its bright path in the sky, and passed over to other lands. It is almost midnight: the breath of the week-days, like the chill of the early dawn, is not yet felt. I shall sleep over into the bustling to-morrow with wet eyes, and a throbbing but joyful pulse.

Years ago it was our custom on this night to gather here, or at Rambleton House, and sing our old Connecticut hymns. My father always took the lead, walking the room back and forth, and gesticulating, sometimes in rather an extraordinary manner. The occasion was one of solemnity, but mainly it was a time of praise and thanksgiving.

We formed, at this time, a large circle; and it re-

quired a strong and powerful leader, like my father, to keep us in control. Sometimes that office was assigned to me; but in such case, we always failed in reaching that grand movement which my father commanded.

After such a failure, my father would rise from his seat, look round upon us with a smile, and dash into the same tune with great force and emphasis: after which he would seat himself, and remark, in a modest way, that he had sung that tune "more than forty years ago:" Had learned it, perhaps, on Litchfield Hill; and the first time it was ever sung was at such an ordination,—and was composed by such a one, expressly for that purpose. As to myself, I had been thoroughly trained by my father, years ago, for hours at a time, on rainy mornings, in the most difficult tunes he could select: each taking a different part, and my father dashing through his with great spirit and precision. Pausing occasionally, he would explain to me how Mr. W—th, or Mr. ——, or the celebrated Mr. D—bble, sang the same. At these times, we sang, also, old anthems, now long since laid away (except now and then that we raise them, as it were, from the dead): such as "I beheld, and lo!" (from Haydn's Creation,) "The Heavens are telling," &c.

On the Sunday night meetings of which I was

speaking, we usually sang "Denmark," towards the close; and for the last, a piece composed, or rather collected, by my father, from the closing passages of four different anthems—one by Dr. Madan, from the "Lock Hospital," and the others by eminent composers. The words were—

To our Almighty King
Wonder and praise—wonder and praise belong.

Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss.

Shining in immortal bloom!

These passages being very fine, we were all familiar with them, and sang them with great power. They formed, altogether, a very grand Doxology; after singing which, it was my father's custom, with some abruptness, to say "Good night," and immediately retire.

This was years ago. We meet now—those of us who are left—but more rarely. We sing the same songs: but we are not all here. Some have faded away, and others are scattered about the land. Shall we ever meet again to sing those old tunes? Not here. We

can have but an echo of those days now. But we may meet—all meet—in a better home. (May our Father in Heaven grant that this be so.) We may all meet there and sing them again, with the Hosts of Heaven—with the "thousands and thousands, and ten times thousands," who surround the throne of the Lamb, and cease not day nor night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

All gathered at one hearth—father, and mother, and sisters, and brothers—to walk in white robes—to sing there the song of the Redeemed in Glory! Oh, *my Father and my God*, will this be so? All—*all* gathered in that happy home! Will it be so?

I have been, to-night, in one of my sad but joyous moods: silent and bewildered: the images of old friends and old times about me. It is not long since my voice was strong and firm. It is so now; but in this strange humor—this indomitable wilfulness of the heart—I have no power over it. I can but sit, speechless, and look up with a trembling hope to the kind Heaven which is over all.

I was sitting, to-night, leaned back in my chair, while T. sat by the hearth, gazing silently upon the dying embers, when my father came in, and without speaking to us, began walking slowly across the room.

Presently, he began an old anthem, in a low tone, his voice—a very unusual thing—trembling, and at times almost failing him, while he walked slowly back and forth. The words, as well as I remember them, were "Farewell, farewell, my friends, and God grant that we may meet again, where trouble shall cease and harmony abound." As he finished singing, he turned to me and asked what old piece it was. "Strange," he said, "that I should think of it now. I do not remember of singing it in more than forty years. It must be one of the old pieces we used to sing on Litchfield Hill;" and again he repeated it, slowly, and as if searching carefully for the old tones so long buried—"Farewell, farewell, my friends!"

He retired soon after, but presently returned, with a black leather-covered book (*Songs of the Temple*, 1819), took a seat by the table, by the side of my wife, and opening the book carefully, turned to an old tune not at all familiar to me, but of a soft and plaintive strain. It was very simple in tone, but exceedingly difficult in construction. My father sang it through once by himself, and then asked us to sing it with him. I was in that foolish condition I have mentioned—my eyes troubled with tears—and could make no reply. I was, in fact, pretending to sleep. My father looked at

me a moment, over his glasses, but said no more, and began singing again: my wife joining with him. These are the words:—

> 'Tis finished, so the Saviour cried,
> And meekly bowed his head and died:
> 'Tis finished—yes—the race is run;
> The battle's fought—the victory won!

They sang it again and again, with the same words. My wife has a sweet voice, and they both sang in low and subdued tones; my father using but little of his usual gesticulation, only raising and lowering his hands slowly, as in prayer. Once at the close of the verse, he looked at T. with a smile, and remarked, gently, that she did not quite touch a certain note. "But," said he, in the same low tone, "it is very intricate." Again and again, they repeated it, and the words still throb at my heart—

> The battle's fought—the victory won!

At length my father rose, bowed, without speaking, and retired. T. came and sat by me, silently, for a few moments, and went up to her rest.

And now the midnight has come, my friend, and Sunday night is over. I must go now. But I shall

still see that picture of youth and age bending over the old book—the calm and prayerful face of T. and the grave but rapt look of my father—I shall still hear, in the morning watch, those sweet sad tones, and those glorious words :—

> 'Tis finished—yes—the race is run:
> The battle fought—the victory won!

Addio. Z. P.

X.

Frank.

Your conjecture is right: my friend Frank is the same—changed by years and illness—older and wiser perhaps: and you are that Professor whom he met at the famous city of one house on the St. John's, where, so long ago, you ate strawberries together. Other years afterward, I also stopped at the same place with Father Williams, and ate strawberries from the same bed.

When you knew him, he was coasting about in search of health, which had escaped him; and all about the world he has not found it again. He will not find it here. In this contrivance of flesh and blood by which we manage to live, he will not find it. He must look further. And this is Frank's opinion.

This world—I have heard him say—is well enough for a beginning. It is not imperative that life, here,

should be a failure: not quite. Something may be done: as much as God designed,—but to live on so,—Oh my dear Pun, would it not be ludicrous? say rather would it not be madness?

You observe from this, that he is by no means elated with the present state of things. He does not care for a long residence in it: and this is why he lives. In any other mood, he would die to-morrow. Over-anxiety, whether to live or die, would close the story.

The beautiful things which turn up here and there find a warm welcome with him; but this early forethought, looking forward to the end, has taken from life the peculiar charm, which is so tempting to the world at large. Of course he never plans or builds up future possibilities: more often he amuses himself with the important hurry and bustle of the world.

"There is a man," he will say, speaking of some one who is constantly building and planning for future years,—"the surprise to that man when he comes to die will not be so much that he is dead, as that he cannot go right on with the matter he had in hand. But what will be his consternation at that! so petty, so annoying, such a monstrous impertinence!—'what is all this,'—he will say: and doubtless it will be,—what is all this?"

It is perhaps safe to say that Frank is a happy and cheerful-hearted man;—but to the great world he is the veriest vagabone. Money is nothing to him: books only and friends, are something; the birds, the sunlight and the sweet south wind; moonlight, the summer showers, and lightnings, and all beautiful things:—these are something, and he never suffers them to pass without ministering to him. Is it so with your men of business, and care and infinite botherations, moneyed or political, or whatsoever?

Frank has his times, however, of making faces, and one of his luxuries, as he used to say to me, is in growling; a good rich growl being equal to a bite out of a sour apple. But of late he begins to tire, even of growling.

I have concluded—he says—to let my ailings take care of themselves—for what return do I get? Have I not grumbled about, for years, and tossed and tumbled of nights, and looked long for the morning, and then tossed and tumbled again—and of what use, I ask you. Have I not wished even for that long deep sleep,—to lie down in that sweet oblivion, to wake no more to aches and pains and these small frettings of life. Have I not bathed and bothered sufficiently, I beg to know? I say I have. I think that I have. As Mr. Webster would say,—I do suppose that I have. And now, if the leg will ache, let

it: and if the head will get cloudy, and the old bones crumble and fall,—let them! But I cannot stop to bother any more with such small nonsense. Life is too short to be detained with these impertinences. Let the leg and the head see to their own affairs:—what is it all to me who have something to do yet, and will do it, God willing, though the stars fall from the heavens.

In such mood, perhaps, you ate strawberries together and shot at alligators, years ago, on the St. John's.

Such, at least, is Frank Bryars, now, in this glorious summer of 1850. Yours, Z. P.

XI.

T. and the Rector.

July, 1850.

We have now fairly entered upon our up-country summer, and, as we think, with the happiest success. All the long day—like Lamb's "roast pig"—is enjoyable throughout; and we by no means refuse the night. A glorious summer!

A little while since, I was lying in the hammock between the maples, when my wife and Tidy burst upon me with great spirit, on their return from prayers at the parish church. "Such times!" said T., coming up the yard very quickly, with great brilliance of color, and emphasizing through the air with her right fore-finger,—"Such times!—what do you think? there was no one there to ring the bell, and so I thought I would do it myself; for it was more than five minutes past the time: but just as I had got it in a good ring, the rope caught

somewhere, and took a flourish, and I could not make a single sound. Well: what could be done,—it was then ten minutes after church time. So the Rector had to go up and toll the bell himself, and there the people were coming in, and he up in the belfry, with his surplice on, tolling the bell by hand! But that isn't all."—

"Wait a moment," said I. "Lie down here, both of you, side by side, and take breath, or I shall have to run for brandy and lavender."

After being well disposed in the hammock, and T. had arranged her right arm, so that she could give the requisite force to her remarks, I permitted her to go on. "But keep cool," said I, giving the hammock a gentle swing—"and now proceed." "Why," said the lady, "there was nobody there to sing; and of course"—speaking with a good deal of solemnity,—"it was impossible to omit it, and so I rose and set the tune myself; and we got on very well, till just in the middle of the verse, I found the tune did not fit the metre."

"And what did you do then?"—said I. "Oh"—said she; making a very severe gesture,—"it was dreadful! but I only stopped, and thought for a moment, and then went on again with another; and what is more," she continued, with an air of triumph, "they all joined in, and we sang it delightfully."

"And what is more," said I, "you have made yourselves sharp for dinner: and what did Tidy do?" "Why, she sang with me, of course, or I should never have got through."

"And where was Frank?" I continued.

"He was not there," said Tidy, and springing from the hammock, she stepped quickly to the hall door and disappeared.

"T.," said I, quietly, "did you observe that?" "What!" said she, with some alarm.

"Did you observe Tidy's manner, when I spoke of Frank?"

"Oh that was nothing"—said T.—"You don't mean to say" ——

"Yes," said I, "I do mean to say" ——

My wife rose from the hammock, and said with great deliberation, "My dear husband it is impossible: there it nothing in it. Frank admires her very much; that is very evident, and *he* may have his thoughts,—but Tidy, the dear child, tells me every motion of her heart. Oh, no: not at all!" and having disposed for ever of this matter, she remarked a little upon the state of the parish, and retired.

"Well:" thought I to myself, taking the vacant hammock, "we do not all see alike. My gentle people

have their ways, and I have mine; and those two birds building their nests in the vine between the piazza columns, have theirs; and there is a lesson there of more worth than many conjectures."

In any case the day is beautiful.

Addio, Z. P.

XII.

Midsummer.

Up-Country, July 3d, 1850
Morning ——

It is almost midsummer, my friend, and what kind of a day do you suppose we have—what kind of a morning? I give you the facts. Thermometer 63°—a sour cold wind blustering about (doubtless from the east), and the sky heavy and sad as November.

How must the hearts of the little people already be trembling, lest to-morrow, the great day, should be even like unto this: what a national calamity would that be! It has been arranged, not without much discussion, by the Rector and his people, that the parish children of the school and Sunday school, should celebrate the day in our grove. Accordingly, my father had the grass cut there yesterday, and it is lying in swathes all about under the trees, and only this rheumatic wind to cure it:—but great changes may come about before to-morrow. Mean-

time, however, I am sitting by a fire, and have small inclination for out-door affairs. Yesterday we had men pounding about on the top of the house, fixing for the thunder and lightning.

At every little distance they stick a point out, and so bristling is the whole affair, I expect we shall be struck all of a heap the very first storm that we have: so many, and so pointed, are the invitations.

Did you hear of the young man who was in the habit of sitting by an open window, in thunder-storms, and watching the lightning playing down the rod close by? It was not I.

I have not written for a day or two, having been more pleasantly occupied in the society of our friends lately arrived from below. Their coming has been an event not soon to be forgotten, but the arrival of the baby with them, has been the chief feature in the case: because this baby, be it observed, is not an every-day baby. You know how apt babies are, to be remarkable,—but, sir, perhaps you never saw a baby like this:—I presume to say, you never did. That it is fair and round-faced, and has a forehead like Daniel Webster's: that it never cries: that it is always "jolly," so to speak:—these things are something, but what I have to add, is the penetrating sagacity with which it selects out one par-

ticular person, and wherever that person may go—up, down, or sideways—there follow the baby's eyes with the pertinacity of a magnet. And who do you suppose is that individual?—The father? the mother? or my wife? or Tidy? or grandfather? No! sir—*I* am that individual! You will ask, perhaps, if I am all the time dandling it: Never had the baby in my arms but once in my life, and then,—but as I was saying, there is no doubt it will be an extraordinary child. I have already told the mother to seize the first opportunity, of its being able to handle things—to present to it a *brush* and a *pen:* one or the other it will grasp and use immediately with the greatest delight, and I prophesy it will take the *pen*, and if the first thing it does is to put that pen in its mouth, it will, in my opinion, show its preference in an undoubted manner: it will be a *sign:* as the gentle-people say.

Au revoir, Professor: I have to-day all the house upon my hands. Yours, Z. P.

XIII.

The Storm.

Up-Country, July 3d—Evening.

The cool morning ran rapidly up into a hot noon, and the hot noon bred the lightning, and we have had a waking-up all over these borders, with rain in torrents, such as has not been seen for many days. All over the black sky flew the red lightning, brilliant, wavy and zig-zag, and close behind followed the big thunder: rain, hail, and the great winds northwesterly, and the thunders and lightnings,—they all came down together. The Shag-bark, high and furious before, now roared by, dashing itself in foam and spray, and under all, you heard the deep low shock of the falls tumbling down the hills from the great Passamaquoddy.

Now was the time for our new lightning conductor to be in its element. No doubt it behaved itself bravely, catching up the winged thunder as it flew down within

reach of its spider arms, and so silently and swiftly carrying it home again to mother earth. How it must have hissed and sputtered, with the white lightning and the rain both pouring down together! How its points must have bristled and snapped! The next storm that comes, I shall seat myself at a safe distance in the garden, under an umbrella, and watch the proceedings through an opera glass.

Did I tell you that the storm lasted till near midnight? Kate and Ann, poor things, put up blankets and counterpanes to keep out the sharp eyes of the lightning, and even the baby cried out at one very sharp flash.

In the very thick of the commotion, and when it was maddest, my father came striding through the rooms, singing a fragment of an old war-time song:—

The fifteenth of October
  The year of eighty-one:
Cornwallis, he surrendered
  To General Washington:

Don't you see the bomb-shells flying?
  The cannon loud do roar:
De Grasse is in the harbor
  And Washington's on shore!

You see, sir, that we can do some things even in this high latitude.—Don't suppose that you have all the thunder and lightning.

When are you coming up? If you don't come, write and say all manner of things.

Yours, Z. P.

XIV.

Frank and Mr. P. by the Shag-Bark.

We went down on the river-bank, this afternoon: Frank, with his cigar, and Mr. Pundison with the undisturbed memory of a happy dinner.

It is pleasant, sir, to escape from this inevitable *I*. Let us say *we*, as often as may be convenient. For we, thou, he, she, or it, are always better—are they not—than whatever I? Doubtless: and this is why it is pleasant to ride, walk, play at wicket, or mingle in city crowds: so, to escape this intense personality, this perpetual introversion; and see other things than I: to meet thou, her, and him, and the great wide-armed world of nature, sunshine, and clouds, and the sightless winds, waters, and grasses, and the young flowers.

Something like this, as we walked down, I remarked, also, to Frank.

"All which," said Frank, "is very well. In town, however, where the second and third persons number hundreds of thousands, are we more modest? Are we crushed with the sense of other existences? Do we not rather return, always, from mingling with the great crowd, with a still heartier liking for the home which is so concentred in I: and with a strong determination to take excellent care of it? Oh no, Pun: let us love the country, only remembering always, that towns are, and that thereby we have the morning papers. As to the I, it is inevitable. No one can be rid of it: at least," said he, with a subdued voice, "not here."

Sitting by the river-side, we pondered upon events: the past, the future, and the warm present. Therm. at 90° as we left the south piazza. But there is a coolness in the sound of running waters. It was pleasant, therefore, by the river, and the silent vote was that the day was surpassingly fine.

Frank finished his first cigar, and lighting a second, opened Tennyson to page 158, vol. ii.

And on her lover's arm she leant,
  And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went,
  In that new world which is the old,
Across the hills and far away
  Beyond their utmost purple rim,—

"What a delightful time they must have had. Pun, would you like to travel?"

"No: I have travelled. What is the use of travel except to come home again?"

"Yes; but suppose you take your home with you? For, you observe, 'On her lover's arm she leant,' and moreover, 'Deep into the dying day, the happy maiden followed him:' and, in another place, it reads, 'Through all the world she followed him.' So Ruth, also, 'Whither thou goest,' &c.—don't you see, sir, that it's important to travel?"

Mr. Pundison was resting from the fatigue of his late argument upon personalities, and made no reply.

"That is," continued Frank, after a considerable pause, "to travel in this way, with some one following you all about the world, 'Beyond the night, across the day;'" and rising, he skipped a stone far out into the river, and seated himself again, on a bed of moss.

"Pun," said he, suddenly, with an indifferent manner, "do you think I ought to marry?" "Why not?" said Mr. P., who was nearly asleep. "Why not!" said Frank, warming indignantly; "why that is the whole heart of the matter. Observe! Have I the *right* to take any one with me, on such a journey as this life must be to me? To embody with this life," he continued,

rising and walking to and fro, and addressing, by turns, and with a solemn pause to each, the river and the sky, and a king-bird that looked down shyly at him, from the top branch of a hickory—"to embody—to fasten upon this life, health and youth, and hope, and the pureness of a holy and glad soul? To make this young child old before her time? Does God design such things? Is it right—is it right—oh, is it right?"

The river made no reply: the king-bird was non-committal, waiting for a bee; otherwise he would have had an opinion: and Mr. Pundison was in his usual after-dinner forgetfulness.

"Pah!" said Frank, "the man's asleep! What a happy dreamer he is, with his T., and Tidy and the dogs, and his easy way of napping. I wonder if he could spare any of them—could he spare Tidy, for instance? And what would T. do?"

At this juncture Mr. Pundison awoke, and related a remarkable dream at great length and detail, and wound up by asking Frank if he believed in dreams.

"Bah!" said Frank, "that isn't the question. The question is"—rising and placing both hands on his friend's shoulders—"the question is, do you think, my dear Pun, do you think"—

The pause being a very long one, and Frank con-

tinuing to look him very steadily in the eye, Mr. P. suggested, "Well—do I think what?"

"Do you think"—relaxing his grasp, and a smile of consciousness returning to his pale face—"do you think—it will rain to-morrow?"

"I think it will," said Mr. P. very gravely, "you can see it in the sunset—there is the rain tint; but the next day, Frank, will be glorious!"

XV.

Summer Weather.

Pundison House, Up-Country,
July 10, 1850.

The summer goes on royally. That blast from the last of the icebergs has passed away, and now the days and nights roll softly and radiantly through the warm airs of 80 and 90 of Fahrenheit.

Frank sends me, this morning, one of the pleasant results of this delicious weather; all rocked out in verse, after his fashion.

We interchange thus, every thing, even to gems of the first water. What is mine is his, and what is his is mine, to the bottom of our pockets: and when he dies (and may the sweet Heavens keep the day far distant), I fancy I shall not stay long away from him.

T. is discussing travel—a look about town—a little of the sea-air, and so forth.

If we go, it will be in a circle—and a small one, I hope—returning with swift and glad wings. Shall we meet any where? I inclose the "Thanksgiving."

Yours, Z. P.

XVI.

Thanksgiving.

By Frank Bryars. July, 1850.

The day went on brightly, till nearly at noon,
  When the thunder, and lightning, and rain,
Came down in broad sheets, and the burning air soon
  Was cool and fragrant again.

All the rest of the day, the black masses lay,
  Shutting us up in the gloom of a night
Which arrived all too soon; and the beautiful birds
  Shuddered and looked for the light.

But, just at the sunset, the clouds roll'd away;
  And the blue of the sky, kind thoughts, sweet words,
And the red light, that went down with the day,
  Seem'd all one with the song of the birds;
    And the birds sang all the night long.

Far down in the meadows came up their sweet voices,
  Each, one and all, in its silver tone cast;
And with all their might singing—as one who rejoices,
  And says a thanksgiving for storms that are past.

Then soon came the moonlight, and play'd in the trees,
  The thorough-clad maples that shade all the house,
Nodding and tossing their heads in the breeze—
  The sweet summer breeze that came up from the south:
    Where the birds sang all the night long.

Late in the night we went up to our rooms—
  Rooms light and airy, set apart for sweet rest,
With wide-open windows which look'd from the east,
  All round through the south to the west.

There lay the white moonlight, chasing the glooms,
  While the maples were nodding and tossing without,
And the sweet music flew round through the rooms;
  Sometimes as in prayer, sometimes with a shout—
    Of the birds singing all the night long.

Reclin'd upon couches, we thought not of sleep,
  But mark'd how the moonlight seem'd writing out words,
On the bright-tinted carpet, noiseless and deep,
  For this beautiful song of the birds.

But looking we nodded, and nodding we dreamed;
  And the thunder, and lightning, and rain,

Precisely as yesterday—only worse—seemed
  To come back to our spirits again,
    While the birds sang all the night long.

Then again—all the day—the black masses lay,
  Shutting us up in the gloom of a night
Which had come all too soon: and, like the sweet birds,
  We shudder'd and look'd for the light.

But waking, ere morning, behold 'twas a dream—
  This return of the storm—for the sky was still blue,
And the music still came, and flew like the gleam
  Of the moonlight playing the maple-boughs through,
    Of the birds singing all the night long.

Straightway I arose, and call'd out to my friends:
  "Let us sing now a thanksgiving song:
Or again, in some form, we shall dream of that storm,
  Lo! the birds sing all the night long!"

Then we sang a glad song, and the rest that came after,
  Illumined with light, was so tranquil and deep,
That never was song, or gladness, or laughter,
  So rich and heart-filling as that morning sleep:
    When the birds sang all the night long.

Frank sends me a note, in regard to the above, as follows:

"You remember the storm, the dark afternoon, the

sunset, and the moonlight, I suppose [I had forgotten about it, but Tidy remembers it minutely, and says she heard the very same birds: having waked in the night, after a strange dream she had, and which she recounts with great vivacity]; but you may not have heard the birds sing: I *did*, however, and heard them afterwards, on going to bed, and deep in the night; whether I arose and called my friends together for a song is a matter not so easily determined—I may have dreamed that part of it. But I made up the poem, much as it is now, before daylight; ah, my friend, if such things would happen every day, that I might sing out the remnant of my life in song, song and thanksgiving! Is there such a life anywhere, do you suppose? and should we tire of it, think you? I shall soon know, perhaps.

"'Like this,' as our friend C. says, like it, oh, Z. P., and say it is *charmante*—say it is enchanting! say it is —let me see—say it is *heart-filling*, and then, may be, some fine morning, I will send you some more.

"P. S.—You are not to imagine, that it was the poplar blackbirds I heard the other night. Sir, they are *gabblers*, compared with the singing that came up from those meadows. Do you think they were meadow larks? They came from the meadows, and from the river-side, and occasionally seemed to be all about the

house, pausing now and then, and then bursting out again, and making it all ring with their sweet singings. Like it—like it—oh, Z. P., like it exceedingly.

FRANK BRYARS."

XVII.

The Hammock and the Placer.

July 15, —, Piazza.

A GREAT day! ten o'clock, ante-meridian, and thermometer at 85°. I shall get two naps to-day. One before dinner, and one after. Pre, and post-prandial. One in the hammock between the maples (before it gets too hot); one in the leather-back, on the piazza.

How did you like the "Thanksgiving?" Cleverish! I think so. But Frank, poor fellow, deceives himself about those things, and so, I fear, does one other, who sees wonders in all Frank does. Doubtless, he wrote it off easily and rapidly; but what then? What does it all amount to? You may laugh, but I believe I could do it myself, half-a-dozen times a day. Give me a subject, sir, and observe the consequences—the rhythms and myths which shall come to you all in the latest and highest style of art. Moreover,—who ever heard of a *sheet of thunder?*

A great day. "A July day," as some one says, "hot and glorious." I saw it in a paper—a Boston paper. It was about a book, and I would give a gold piece to know who said it. "Hot and glorious!"

I was almost asleep, just now, when all in the mid-day stillness, solemn almost as the midnight, I heard a light step in the grass, and behold the dog Rover approaching cautiously, with an immense bone in his mouth, giving him a very fierce appearance; only that his eyes, as he stopped to look at me, were mild and beneficent. After giving me this high, abstract look, he walked very slowly down the gravel-path, his tail curled extremely tight on his back, and his whole movement solemn and important. At the bottom of the yard he stops, now, and looks about cautiously, makes a right angle to the foot of the pine-tree, puts down his bone, and looks about again. What will he do next? He considers a moment, and now he decides. Let us work, he says, while the day lasts. He is digging a hole, and his fore-paws play in and out, swifter than a weaver's shuttle. And now he drops the bone in the hole, covers it carefully, but quickly, and walks up again, in the same grand manner, his tail, if any thing, a little higher and tighter than before. He walks up to me and laughs, in the broadest sense of the word. Not a horse-laugh, but a dog-laugh.

Pompey, where are you? I call Pompey, and we, also, take a little walk. I take Pompey to that hole under the pine-tree, and make suggestions. No? Absolutely, sir, the dog says he smells nothing there—nothing at all. Rover stands a little way off, profoundly indifferent. I put *him* at the scent. "What is it?" he says, looking up the north road, very furious—"show me the enemy!" and he sneezes three times, and looks up—down—any where rather than at that deposit—that placer—richer to him than Golconda—which the rascal has just now made.

Ah, what a world it is, sir! I am outwitted by two silly dogs. Henceforth I will stay in my hammock, and inquire, "What is truth?"

How innocent they look. Babes in the wood not more so. Unless some bumble-bee happens along, they will be asleep directly. Just now, before they left the pine, I observed they stopped to *dogmatize* upon some subject, and were apparently in high glee. They had compared notes!

Good morning, I will now take nap number one.

Z. P.

XVIII.

The Sea-Side.

Tumbling Beach, Tac Hatterac,
August, 1850.

You see by my date, sir, that we are out in the great world. Our friends who were with us, when I last wrote, left us after one or two pleasant weeks, and we began to be slightly dull. My wife, also, had some ambition about getting abroad a little, and, to-day, a week, we were among the arrivals at ——— House, Tumbling Beach, Tac Hatterac.

It is not wise, Professor (as one of the five hundred here gathered); it is not wise, or well, to bark at the proceedings; but a modest man may state a preference: and mine would be for a lamb chop, a corn pudding, and one large potato, at, say, Pundison House, Up-Country. For five hundred people can hardly be dined as well as one or two, or a half-dozen; eh? but—one can stay away.

The joy here is the sea; and that is a heart-full. But I love it more on the southern shores. North of Savannah it is too cold for northern invalids: too cold for me, now that I have turned the point of good health, and am descending among uncertainties. The air, too, is an anodyne. I sleep continually, and no dogs to keep me company. Waking, I hear only this solemn pulse beating fainter or louder: and dreaming, I weave it into strange and manifold harmonies. I shall go mad, or something like it, if we stay here. It will not do. T. is with me, and she is all the world to me—Pundison House excepted. If I should get crazed here, and jump into the breakers, what would the child do? No: we must go home; but we will do it at leisure. Frank is hurrying us; but hurry and I have parted. Did I say that Tidy is with us? She is pleasant and happy as usual; but has a great liking, of late, to long and lonely walks on the beach; and dreams, I fear, more than ever. Only that I cannot permit any thing to fatigue, she would be a puzzle to me. The excitements, my dear Professor, that pass me by, from this absolute necessity of repose, are many and various. It is so pleasant, in case of annoyance and wrong, to say to myself—"My friend, you are not well enough, as yet, to be indignant." So, also, as to speculation and inquiry:—

while T. is just now beginning to remark upon this and that, I am calm and composed; my remarks to the same effect, having been made weeks ago, and no urgency can induce me to reconsider. Let the child dream, say I: what has that to do at the sea-shore, which was a meditation of almost a month ago, at Pundison House?

When is your furlough? Those two weeks, I mean, of up-country shootings, wild as your own comets, for so only can you by any economy of calculation see the half of your friends, and then only at a glance. Where shall we meet? Write me when you leave the great city, and I will contrive a collision, if possible.

Frank, I am sorry to say, is poorly; he started to come down to us, but only reached New York, where he is way-laid with his ailings, and is only caring, now, to get back again to the north. He writes cheerfully, as usual. I send you his letter of a day or two since.

Mansion House, Sunday afternoon.

DEAR ZACH:

The beautiful Sunday is almost gone,—so swiftly go the bright and happy things, and now I turn longing eyes, seaward and up-country, to the friends who are on either side, but not here to cheer this maimed and grum-

bling life. It is five of the clock, but still sunny and pleasant. I am just up from a sleep of two blessed hours, taken from the rich heart of this golden day. How must the little devils, if such there are (and doubtless there are youngsters in iniquity), how must they have been astonished that, doing their worst, they could not prevent that composing draught,—that sweet oblivion of two mortal hours. If any doctor had said to me, "sleep from three to five," I could not have done it more to the letter of the prescription. I had a little fire in the grate, for the morning was cool, and having dined at two o'clock (as all do to-day), I wheeled up the sofa, got into my slippers, and, as aforesaid, made the little devils gape with astonishment.

I went down this morning to St. Paul's Church, and being in my old coat and hat, the sexton gave me a seat far down the aisle—with a rum-breather. Miserable-looking was he, thin and pale, and almost paralytic: but he had with him a dogs-eared "delightful prayer book," which he constantly studied and pored over, reading with a kind of solemn gladness, that was almost ludicrous: He rose and sat down, half the time, all wrong, but with entire unconsciousness of so doing. In fact he had a certain grand manner, occasionally, that expressed something like this—"Undoubtedly:—now let us praise

the Lord!" and upon this he would rise with great dignity. I have spoken of his foul breath, but now I began to sympathize with this strange man, and concluded to stay through the service: but *then*, I said to myself, I would certainly go—and being so far down the aisle, I could easily slip out by one of the west doors: but the service went on, and all the while the man seemed so unconscious of annoyance to any body, I could scarcely reconcile my mind to what would seem so like an unchristian act. He looked about forty years old, and was already bald almost down to his ears, where was a little stubble which he kept trained to grow up instead of down: his face was cadaverous as death itself, and all the time he was sitting, he kept twisting his skeleton legs around each other like wires, and was bending and fumbling over that old torn prayer-book. Occasionally, he turned his wretched face about upon the audience; and once, as I had not taken my book, he offered to divide his with me, which, however, I declined. Now and then, as perhaps after gazing, in a sort of puzzle at his withered hands, he would brace up, and seem to be saying to himself—"We are thin and poor—but we do hold out amazingly, a-mazingly:—we may outlive these young people after all: the Lord be praised! Amen!"

Finally, the service was over, and we stepped out

into the aisle, when, to my worldless horror, he put on his hat in the middle of the church! My wrath (for if it was not wrath which I then felt, what was it?) my wrath, I say, was immense, and I could hardly keep from taking his hat off forcibly with my own hands. After all I had imagined about him—after all I had put up with, from him—so kindly as I had felt for him—for him to put his hat on—and a shocking bad hat, too—all square and fair in the open church! I choked it all down, however, saying to myself, "He don't know any better, perhaps,—let him live—let the poor fellow live!" and so, instead of taking his hat, per force, I went on with him, side by side; the crowd, I thought, staring about as much at *me*, in my old coat, as at him, and so at last, we passed out into the bright sunshine: I, to come up to my pleasant rooms, and among cheerful faces, and he, perhaps, to go to his miserable home,—who knows?—and to his miserable grog. But the last I saw of him, he had his little prayer-book fast with him:—it was still clean enough for him: I looked upon his wretched face, and over and over again, as I mixed in the gay throng which now crowded the streets, I thought—I may need his prayers more than he may need mine: God only knows. And so, again and again, in the waving crowd of elegance and dress, that simple

and all-embracing petition was on my lips and at my heart; still pressing and pressing, and again pressing, its sweet repetition:

May God have mercy upon us!

Yours, FRANK BRYARS.

I inclose one other letter which came to-day.

Mansion House, Wednesday.

DEAR ZACH.:

IT'S a rainy morning, and rather cold and dark, but I say to myself,—it's Wednesday, and the week can't last always, and to-morrow Fanny is coming down, and then I shall get me up, how joyfully, to my rest in the hills of the up-country. For some days, I have been as clear as a mountain spring,—but this morning, by the help of an anodyne for last night's rest, I am muddy and disagreeable.

I got your letter yesterday, indicating its arrival by a star on the corner of the one I sent you. Ah, my friend, when will you be done with the small vanity of that watering-place? Come up, oh Zachariah P., before I cast you off as a worldling, and a vagabone: come back to the hills—to your easy nap after dinner, and

the sweet breath of the morning. As for me, I am weary of this great city. If, in some happy moment, I wander down the street, singing some little stave, or whistling a small matter to myself, one cannot help seeing that people stare, as though I was doing some wicked thing; this it is, or my old coat, and which, I find it difficult to determine. Oh, let me go home: much do I want to see your father again, and to sit once more under the old maples and pines: unless you come home, sir, I may go over to Pundison House, and take possession: that puppy, too, I must see—I want to hear his bark—he's beginning early—but so it is in this damp and miserable world, where the "original sin" breaks out, even in puppies: there is no escape, you see, from the general law. An important query might be started, in regard to dogs, "whether the sins of the fathers descend unto the third and fourth generations:" I have seen dogs, which have given me strong suspicions, that they were suffering from the above law: as to Rover and Pompey, it is plain that their progenitors were of the highest respectability, and no doubt of gentle blood. —— Your father's rhyme, I prefer, as first composed:

> "The little dog came over:
> Kate chain'd him fast to Rover:
> They feel as fine as calves in clover."

In this way the lines harmonize, and the sentiment is brought out in a gradually increasing climax, which is very effective. But, when you say "bouncing over," and "poor Rover," the harmony of the parts is disturbed, and the accent brought in the wrong place. I may be wrong, but would respectfully submit the matter to your father's more mature consideration. In either case, I suppose, the facts will remain the same. This is important. Is Tidy to stay with you? If she thinks of going home soon, I would try to come down for her. Say to her that I saw an old friend of hers a day or two since, who asked a thousand questions about her. Don't forget this. Good-bye. F. B.

P. S.—It is Thursday night, and I am entering—or rather am already entered—upon my twenty-fifth year! Am I sorry about it? Oh, no! a thousand times no! Let the dead bury the dead: but let *us* go on! If to grow older, is to grow wiser and better (and without this hope, life is a misnomer), then let me grow old rapidly. Let them come on! let them come on, the days that are left to me; and the swifter the better.

People talk of growing old, as though at the death of this body, we should not continue to grow on, as before. Ah, sir, let me say it with reverence, but I ask you, Is not the Almighty the Ancient of Days?

But at twenty-four (almost half the old allotted period) it is time, high time, my old friend, to be ready for the long journey. Time for us to do something more, than to loiter about the world, eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and being, in some weak fashion, respectably decent, and passably amiable, and not outrageously vile. For, wherever we go, into whatever place of abode, when we leave these ashes and take on that higher life, shall we not carry with us this winged and fiery spirit, which, if we curb it not now, and chasten it not now, and master it not now, *will then master us?* Adieu. FRANK BRYARS.

Autumn.

I.

The Dark Days.

Pundison House, Up-Country,
Nov. 1850.

Oh! my friend, what a lapse is here! Looking back to your last letter, I find the warm date of July, and I remember me, also, in that already dim and far-away time, of various talks of naps on the piazza, thunder-storms and such like tropical matters: and now, it is this solemn and cold time of the year, which we call November. Out-doors, as it happens this morning,—and will often happen, no doubt, till winter comes,—are the gray wet sky, and the slippery walking, and the rawness of easterly winds: within doors, we make up such a contrast as you find in a grate well filled with large blocks of wood, and a modicum of coal; making a very grand substitute for a Christmas fire. My wife has already got up her curtains, huge as they are, and ponderous to a weighty degree, as I think, for a plain up-country house.

In these dark days, I threaten occasionally to cut them down; and we have only compromised at last, by having them well fastened back, so as to get a kind of bright twilight that is endurable. Mrs. P., at this moment, sits close by, looking intently and motionless upon a pile of stuffs that are spread out before her. A moment since she was measuring it, by holding one end at the tip of her nose, and stretching out the stuff to the length of her left arm. This proceeding looks very wise —few things look more so,—but the odds are, from that lady's present appearance, that she is in a snarl of some kind. That is my opinion: but I never say any thing upon such occasions, as I should probably fail of getting any reply, at least before tea. I should not wonder, if there were more curtains in the case, to darken some other pleasant room. We shall see.

Talking of tea, our little round table is lonely of late. Tidy, who was with us last summer, was tempted off to the house of a friend at the sea-side, and has not yet returned: we look for her soon, and then we shall begin to think of Thanksgiving and Christmas. So we go: only the other day it was summer, and now we talk of our Thanksgiving, and what we shall send to the Rector. And what have we done, all this time, other than to go through the same round of eating and sleep-

ing, with now and then an extraordinary dream? are we wiser, better, stouter? I wish I could claim the last, at least; but here I am, as usual, with my old growls and weaknesses, and sometimes with a doubt, as to what the winter will do with me. But I rather incline to put a good face upon matters. The dogs,—let me say,—never were better; or their performances more strikingly brilliant. It is amusing to see them sitting, side by side, in the sunshine, on still cold mornings, disdaining, as it were, any shelter, and perhaps acclimating by a kind of instinctive forethought against the intense cold which will be coming by and by. I will take a lesson from them, and as C. says, "cirkelate, cirkelate." How is the quicksilver with you? we count down to 34°.

Yours, Z. P.

P. S.—I have left this sheet unfinished, for a day or two, and now—behold a morning, clear and sparkling as a mountain spring. It is so utterly still, that the hammers over the river ring out far and wide; while the great Shag-Bark grumbles and growls like forty-five bears all tied by the tail. Every one speaks low and dreamingly. Tib, who used to stand all last summer, in the farther corner of the pasture, in the shade of the hickories, now parades herself in the very middle of the meadow, and looks the sun straight in the face:

looks and chews. I can distinctly see the motion of her chops at this distance, and the smoke of her breath.

But I have not told you, that with the new weather, came Tidy from the low country. Even so: we have given her the south-room, up-stairs; which looks miles away, over the river and rapids, and by one window in the east, you can look over the well-pole, down through the pine grove to the very region of the rising sun. Very pleasant it is of a lazy morning to see the sun, blazing in over the pine trees of the grove, or through the bare branches of the maples on the south: pleasant, I say, so to lie and hesitate, between the pleasure of the half-dream, which you know is a dream only, and the undoubted reality of buckwheat cakes and hot souchong, getting ready below. Tidy, who is always dreaming, will, of course, have golden dreams there. With a clean wood fire, and an open hearth, and that immense chair, which is large enough for at least three such little bodies as hers, she will like that room, I fancy, almost as much as the seat under the maples in the warm summer-time. Sometimes we shall look in upon her; but more often she will come down, and help take from the gravity of these grand and ponderous curtains. I have put a stove in the hall, which sends up a constant cloud of vapor from the top, making the travel between the

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